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SHIFNAL RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

I N T E R I M R E P O R T

on the

HEALTH and SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES

of the

RURAL DISTRICT OF SHIFNAL

for the Year

1945.



SHIFNAL RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

GEORGE THOMAS,
CLERK OF THE COUNCIL.

TELEPHONE SHIFNAL 155.

GT/MJ.

THE GROVE,

SHIFNAL, SHROPSHIRE.

17th. October, 1946.

The Secretary,
Ministry of Health,
Whitehall, London, S.W.1.

Sir,

2367/10000.

... With reference to your letter of the 7th.
instant, I enclose herewith six copies of the Annual
Report of the Medical Officer of Health for 1945.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

Geo. Thomas.
— j.
Clerk.



Despite the cessation of hostilities the Ministry of Health has made no change and this Report is, therefore, presented again in an abbreviated interim form.

There was a considerable fall in the total of notified diseases and, of that total, Measles accounted for more than three quarters. Despite this with measles itself, there was a marked diminution in frequency. All other infections were brought to notice in very small numbers. There was a complete absence of Diphtheria in the twelve months. No deaths were accounted to these infections. Tuberculosis showed a slight rise in total and there were 2 deaths from this disease of the lungs. Nevertheless the death rate remains about half of that of the Country.

Vital Statistics show that the Birth Rate has fallen very slightly but it is still above that of England.

The General Death Rate is slightly lower than in 1944 and compares well with that of the country. Infantile Mortality is about half of that generally prevailing and no deaths were recorded from maternal causes.

The Sanitary Circumstances of the Area are dealt with in the relevant sections of this Report. The work of the Department has been directed to the providing of homes for the people and to improving services associated with these.



SECTION 'A'.

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area (in acres).	39,600.
Registrar General's Estimate of Resident Population.	9,440.
Number of Inhabitated Houses. (end of 1945)	2,574.
Rateable Value.	£69,913.
Sum represented by one penny rate.	£289.
Persons per acre (calculated on popln)	.24.

POPULATION.

A very slight decrease is recorded in the estimate of resident population. This may well be temporary as with additional building of homes and the ready access to places of work in the neighbourhood it may be expected that many will take advantage of the pleasant living conditions in the two principal villages of the District.

Extracts from Vital Statistics.

<u>Live Births</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Legitimate.	103.	70.	173.
Illegitimate.	11.	12.	23.
Totals.	114.	82.	196.
Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated population	20.8.		
Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated population (England and Wales)	16.1.		
<u>Still Births</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Legitimate.	1.	1.	2.
Illegitimate.	1.	-	1.
Totals.	2.	1.	3.
Rate per 1,000 total (live & still) Births - 15.0			
<u>Deaths</u>	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Total Number of deaths.	40.	40.	80.
Death Rate. per 1,000 of population.	8.47		
Death Rate per 1,000 of population. (England & Wales).	11.4		

Infantile Mortality

All Infants per 1,000 live births.	25.5
All Infants per 1,000 live births (England & Wales).	46
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 live legitimate births.	28.9
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 live illegitimate births.	-
Total number of Infant deaths -	
Legitimate.	5.
Illegitimate.	-
Deaths from : -	
Cancer (all ages)	18.
Measles (all ages)	-
Whooping Cough (all ages)	-
Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	-

Maternal Mortality

Under this heading there were no deaths.

Chief Causes of Death:

Tuberculosis (all forms)	2.
Cancer.	18.
Intra Cranial Vascular Lesions.	8.
Heart Disease & Circulatory Disturbances.	26.
Respiratory Diseases.	6.
Premature Births, Congenital Malformations &c.	5.
Violence.	6.

SECTION 'B'

General Provision for Health Services in District.

AMBULANCE:

With the centralisation of the Offices and Service Depots it has been found convenient to have the Ambulance garaged on this site; an additional advantage is that the driver is also close at hand for calls. The County Authority is pressing on with its scheme for the unification of this service over its administrative area and is requiring, among other things, that adequate provision be made by all participants to maintain a 24 hours service.

MORTUARY.

At Albrighton, the building taken over to meet war emergencies has been relinquished, and the main mortuary for the area is that attached to the Shifnal Cottage Hospital. This is controlled by the Hospital Board.

SECTION 'C'

Sanitary Circumstances of the area.

SCAVENGING:

This, restricted and serving principally the two largest villages of the Area, has been maintained on a fortnightly basis despite labour difficulties. It is hoped to extend and give the whole area the benefits of this Scheme. At the moment two motors are in use but it is expected that, for the extensive collection planned, a greatly improved type of collector will be put on to this run. The whole aims at efficiency with economy in working and a standard dustbin, again probably under a Council Scheme for this provision, will be an essential component. Much time is now lost through the diversity of receptacles used by householders. Dual tipping is taking place at Shifnal and Albrighton but it is planned that a single site will be put into use. This again should be more economical and allow that degree of control which is, at present, lacking through scarcity of labour.

SALVAGE:

With this service the Authority enjoys the co-operation of the Women's Voluntary Service, particularly in the outlying villages and hamlets. In Shifnal and Albrighton the aim is a weekly collection and in other parts at less frequent intervals. Special service is given on request. The goods collected are confined mainly, to rags, bones and paper but from these it has been found that the income almost covers the expenditure.

VERMIN INFESTATION.

No major infestations have been reported but an outbreak of a lesser degree was brought to notice in the Council's Housing Estate at Albrighton. This was cleaned up by the County Rat Officers who were called on to act. During the course of the year your Sanitary Inspector attended meetings at Shrewsbury on the modern control and means of eradication of this pest. No bug infested homes have been reported in the twelve months - neither has any clothing of this nature been brought to notice. For such cases there are a few facilities locally and the Authority is dependent on the courtesy offered by the County Public Assistance Department for the use of their plant. This use may be granted but is not always available or convenient to the district in need. Certain other Authorities are considering joint action with the view to installation of a disinfestation plant, locally controlled.

WATER.

The main supply to the District, located between Shifnal and Albrighton, is under Local Authority control. This water is subjected to periodic sampling and the reports of these have been satisfactory. Chlorination is not practised. The total consumption from this source varies between 60 - 70 million gallons per year. Some extensions of this service have been made and more ambitious advances have been planned. Of the work already completed part of Sydnal Lane is now served with the main supply, replacing the original wells of uncertain purity. It is planned to provide extensions to Weston Heath and Burlington, while a much larger undertaking will be a service to the Dawley area adjoining and through this to Wellington Rural District. A Public Enquiry on this matter has been held at Wellington. As an offshot from this main the local village of Stirchley will benefit.

As soon as permission of the Ministry of Health has been granted the village of Beckbury will be connected to the Shifnal main service. The private undertaking of the Hatton Estate Company is being taken over by the Authority and this transfer is near to completion. No material change has been made in the number of standpipes and to the homes using such.

Any future difficulties of the nature seen in the matter of localisation and control of water supplies, to one of which difficulties this Council was party in the year, should be prevented if, as a result of the County's Water Survey (the Report of which is expected early in 1946) it can be made possible to secure an intimate working of all water undertakings within that administrative area. By this means the maximum distribution with the minimum overlapping and competition should be the result. In the eastern area the redundancy of the supplies and the limitation of the individual rights of the distributors is manifest to the writer.

SEWERAGE AND DISPOSAL:

The most outstanding achievement of the year has been the completion, as far as permission has been granted, of the Albrighton Works. While these Works are still overtaxed the extension made are considerable and the benefits of such have been appreciated locally. At Shifnal no change in the main structure has been able to be carried out. It was, however, found possible to remove a vast quantity of wet sludge from its close proximity to the works proper and thus relieve the overloaded conditions. In this connection, as a help for the moment, the Engineer has been requested to plan for the improvement of the sludge beds. This improvement is a temporary expedient only as it is recognised a new system of works and disposal is overdue and will be proceeded with at an early date.

At Beckbury the small plant, to meet the needs of this hamlet, has not given satisfaction and modernisation and extension are contemplated. Maintenance work, stopped sewers and the like have been controlled and remedied where necessary and the Sanitary Inspector gave much of his time to this service. Lavatory accommodation at Shifnal, Albrighton and at the Railway Stations has been under review and directions given for repairs and improvements where necessary. Schools have also been supervised and suggestions made for improvement at the Shifnal School where defects in the general drainage were creating a nuisance.

SECTION 'D'

HOUSING:

The programme planned by the Authority may be divided into three categories, viz : -

20 Temporary Houses - planned for building at Shifnal but not yet started.

8 Swedish Houses - 4 in course of construction at Shifnal and 4 to be built at Beckbury.

Normal Permanent Houses - 126 at Shifnal, of these 36 are started.

58 at Albrighton.
6 at Boningale.
6 at Beckbury.
4 at Ryton.
6 at Sheriffhales.
6 at Stirchley.

The above will meet a present application list of 380 and will, in addition, serve to satisfy the demands of overcrowding and homes which will be condemned. No help in the supply of such homes is expected to accrue from the release of Air Ministry houses at Albrighton.

During the year a decision regarding the final classification of houses, as required for the survey of rural areas, was taken and an Officer was appointed to carry out this work, which is now proceeding. Where re-conditioning has been possible consideration as to financial assistance, under the Rural Workers Act was given and in certain cases

granted. Any means to maintain in repair property is deserving of encouragement at this time when it is remembered that with direct labour, the Council has experienced difficulty in keeping abreast of repairs while little could be enforced with private owners. Among the more extensive repairs carried out by the Authority was on property at Albrighton. Under the direction of the Council one house has been condemned while in two others repairs were enforced to prevent this and to provide living amenities for a limited time. As hut-dwellings and caravans have been reported these have been kept under observation. Matters of extortionate rents and anomalies in house charges have received consideration and suitable action has been taken. To meet the needs of future housing the Ministry of Health sent a representative to discuss aspects of the control and management of homes.

SECTION 'E'

Inspection and supervision of Foods.

MILK AND DAIRIES:

Numerous complaints have been received of the dirty state of the bottles used in the distribution of milk. This has been accounted to various cases - the difficulty of bottle replacement, the state when returned to retailer and others. In this connection the Sanitary Inspector made a survey of retailers in his district and reported on the relative hygienic conditions prevailing. Much has been said, locally, regarding the control of milk production but while so many agencies are supervising and the legal directions are so uncertain as to enforcability procedure is difficult and, in many cases, futile. In some measure to overcome this, in association with the County Medical Officer of Health, discussions took place to provide standards for cowhouses and dairies and these directions are now available, in printed form, to the Milk Producers.

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS

This District continues to be served from the Central Abbatoir at Newport and the meat sent in is subject to examination locally on request. This central slaughtering has been supervised during the war by the Sanitary Inspector of Newport. He feels now that other Authorities participating in this service should take some part in the examination and control, which view is endorsed by the Ministry of Health. It is hoped that Shifnal may be able to offer the services of their Officer in proportion as they partake of the total meat slaughtered.

Foods other than meat are examined on request and when unfit for consumption are condemned and confiscated.

SECTION 'F'

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious and Allied Diseases.

The following table gives the number of cases of infectious disease notified during the year together with the number of deaths from such: -

<u>Disease.</u>	<u>Cases notified</u>		<u>Deaths.</u>
	<u>1945.</u>	<u>1944.</u>	
Scarlet Fever.	6.	21.	-
Whooping Cough.	6.	37.	-
Measles.	68.	106.	-
Pneumonia.	4.	7.	-
Puerperal Pyrexia.	2.	2.	-
Erysipelas.	1.	-	-

Incidence of Disease in the various Age Groups.

<u>Years</u>	<u>Scarlet Fever.</u>		<u>Whooping Cough.</u>		<u>Measles.</u>	
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female.</u>
0 -	-	-	-	-	2.	2.
1 -	1.	-	1.	-	4.	4.
3 -	-	-	-	1	3.	6.
5 -	2.	1	1	2	15.	16.
10 -	-	-	-	-	6.	5.
15 -	-	-	-	-	3.	1.
25 -	1	1	-	-	1	-
age unknown	-	-	1	-	-	-

Incidence of disease in the various age groups.

<u>Years.</u>	<u>Pneumonia.</u>		<u>Erysipelas.</u>	
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female.</u>
0 -	-	1	-	-
5 -	-	-	-	-
15 -	1	-	-	1
45 -	1	-	-	-
65 -	1	-	-	-

SCABIES - During the course of the year five cases were treated at Newport Centre and of these none were in-patients.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION:

The Annual Return submitted to the Ministry of Health for the period ending 31st. December, 1945, was as follows : -

	<u>Age under 5 years but over 1 year.</u>	<u>5 years and over but under 15.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Number of children immunised in district.	638.	1675.	2313.
Total child population.	895.	1720.	2615.
Estimated percentage protected.	71%.	97%	88%

During the course of the year a change has been made in the form of returns to the Ministry of Health. Now it is required that two returns covering six-monthly periods and recording the numbers treated in that time be sent and, in addition, an annual return of all children together with details of child population and cases of diphtheria occurring in the twelve months is demanded. No regard is made of percentages and such as are furnished above are of local interest only. Under this Scheme more accurate estimations should be the result. The County Authority continues to administer the clinical work while the Local Office is responsible for the Card Records (received from the County Health Department and from data supplied by private medical practitioners) and for the statistics of this work.

TUBERCULOSIS.

The number of notified cases on the Register at 31st. December, 1945, and the comparative figures for 1944 and 1943 are as follows : -

	<u>MALES.</u>		<u>FEMALES.</u>	
	<u>Pulmonary</u>	<u>Non-Pulmonary</u>	<u>Pulmonary</u>	<u>Non-Pulmonary</u>
1945.	18.	22.	24.	30.
1944.	16.	22.	23.	30.
1943.	16.	22.	20.	29.

New cases notified during the year.

<u>Pulmonary.</u>	<u>Non-Pulmonary.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
6.	1.	7.

DEATH RATES

Shifnal.

England & Wales.

Death Rate for Pulmonary Tuberculosis per 1,000 pop.	.21.	.47.
Death Rate for Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis per 1,000 pop.	-	.10.
Total Death Rate (all forms).	.21.	.57.

There were two deaths (1 male and 1 female) both from pulmonary Tuberculosis.

TABLE OF NEW CASES AND MORTALITY.

NEW CASES.

DEATHS.

<u>Age Group.</u>	<u>Pulmonary</u>		<u>Non-Pulmonary</u>		<u>Pulmonary</u>	
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
0-5	-	-	-	1	-	-
5-15	-	-	-	-	-	-
15-25	-	1	-	-	-	-
25-35	2	1	-	-	-	-
35-45	-	-	-	-	1	-
45-55	1.	-	-	-	-	-
55-65	-	1	-	-	-	1.
Totals -	3.	3	-	1.	1.	1.

CANCER

The number of deaths from Cancer was 18. (11 males and 7 females).

Death Rate per 1,000,000 living population 1906.

England and Wales. 1699.

W.A.M. STEWART.

9th. August, 1946.

Medical Officer of Health.

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